

UNITED STATES  
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

August 2, 1960

*(Smiley has seen)  
- We're going to have  
Pete - yourself a good  
grade in this stuff!  
JL - File w/ brief*

Gentlemen:

Attached please find a statement prepared by the General Advisory Committee to the Atomic Energy Commission on the subject of "USSR Capability in Weapons Development During the Test Moratorium". This statement was prepared as a result of this statutory committee's discussion of the subject at their meeting in Washington on July 26-28, 1960.

The reports of the several briefings mentioned in the statement, including Dr. Bethe's memorandum, will be made available to you should you desire to have copies of them.

Sincerely yours,

*John A. McCone*  
John A. McCone

Attachment

CC: Gen. Goodpaster

DOE review

ADDRESSEES

The Honorable Christian A. Herter  
Secretary of State

The Honorable Thomas S. Gates, Jr.  
Secretary of Defense

✓ The Honorable Allen W. Dulles  
Director, Central Intelligence Agency

The Honorable Gordon Gray  
Special Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs

*Dr. George B. Kistiakowsky  
The President's Science Advisor*

10 AUG  
1960  
*Jag*

**GENERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
to the  
U. S. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
Washington 25, D. C.**

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**USSR CAPABILITY IN WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT  
DURING THE TEST MORATORIUM**

The Committee continued to examine the problem presented at its May meeting on USSR Capability in Weapons Development During the Test Moratorium. Representatives of the Division of Military Application, the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, the Livermore Laboratory, and the Central Intelligence Agency presented excellent briefings on the numerous aspects of the general problem. At the request of the Committee, Dr. H. A. Bethe provided a memorandum entitled "Estimate of USSR and USA Capabilities of Weapons Development". The Committee greatly appreciates Dr. Bethe's efforts in the preparation of this carefully considered statement. As a result of these briefings, Dr. Bethe's memorandum, and accompanying discussions, the Committee submits the following comments.

The General Advisory Committee is convinced that it is technically possible for the USSR to conduct, without serious risk of detection, significant weapons tests under the current test moratorium. We are fearful that under these circumstances the USSR may be able to surpass the United States in nuclear weapons performance. The Commission should recognize that continuation of the current situation increases the risk that the United States advantage will be overcome. We must take vigorous action to break the current deadlock either by securing a test-ban agreement with adequate inspection safeguards or by resuming testing under such conditions as not to contaminate the biosphere.

July 29, 1960

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